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CIA -- BLACK OPERATIONS IN "DIRTY TRICKS DEPARTMENT"

WALTER CRONKITE: Today's report -- more on the CIA. Early this week, one of these broadcasts touched on the subject of the CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY -- the CIA -- and its relation to our democratic society. There was specific reference to a case pending in Baltimore federal court, where it seemed apparent that a traditional judicial process was being abandoned in the name of national security. Now it's clear that's exactly what has happened. The litigation involves two Estonian refugees -- one of them is Juri Raus, who has been revealed as an agent for the CIA. Raus is being sued for slander by Erio Heine, whom Raus publicly labeled an agent for the Soviet secret police.

Attorneys for the CIA now claim that Raus is legally immune from the slander charge, because of his privileged role as a government agent. They also claim that Raus made the charge against Heine on specific instructions from his superiors in the Intelligence Agency, and they insist that a trial, which would require the CIA to produce witnesses in support of its claims about Raus and Heine would not be in the interest of the security of the United States. Officials say such appearances would further compromise the secrecy of the CIA.

It is not possible for a layman to confirm or deny the legitimacy of the CIA claims about the status of agent Raus. It is clear -- and lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union confirm it -- that Heine, who claims he was slandered, is being denied due process. This in itself contravenes constitutional guarantees of impartial justice. Outright disregard for long established judicial practices hardly seems the way to defend democracy. At the very least bad judgment is involved. If it were necessary for the agency to stay out of the limelight in the Raus-Heine case, it would have been far more prudent, it seems, to let the slander case go by default.

A good many Americans are disturbed about what they deem

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"slippery" qualities of the CIA, in dealing not with enemy, but with the American public. Senator J. W. Fulbright's now challenging what he calls a CIA effort to propagandize the American public. More on that after . . .

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Senator Fulbright has noted that an article about the Viet Cong, written by a CIA employee, appears in the current issue of "Foreign Affairs" quarterly. The author, George Carver, is not identified as a CIA man. Fulbright maintains this unacknowledged connection with the CIA means the article may win acceptance as an independent evaluation, rather than a government appraisal of the subject covered. Fulbright believes wide use of such an internal propaganda method could debase the currency of American scholars and foreign policy experts.

Still another point, the importance of the CIA, as an information gathering agency is unquestioned -- but there must and should be, reservations about its so-called "black operations in the dirty tricks" department -- even greater reservations about its propaganda activities. This is Walter Cronkite . . .